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27th MSB prepares for NTC

Story & photo by Spc. Don Ward
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A tank company maneuvers its way tactically across the battlefield, getting closer to an approaching enemy. The soldiers know they are up to the task that awaits them because they have been trained for it.

But what if their tanks had no fuel or repair parts were not available for the tanks unable to go the day before? And the medical support needed to keep the soldiers at peak performance?

Fuel, repair parts and medical care are just a few of the support elements necessary to keep a tank company as well as any Army unit ready to fight.

And the soldiers of the 27th Main Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division have been doing just that in a recent field training exercise here to prepare for their upcoming National Training Center rotation in January.

"We are conducting a field training exercise to prepare for our National Training Center rotation scheduled for January. Basically, our main mission on the battlefield is to support the front line firepower, by providing fuel, ammunition, medical, mechanical support and transportation with our Heavy Equipment Transporter System, an M1070 truck tractor and an M1000 trailer that can transport a 70-ton payload," said Sgt. 1st Class Rodney McCann, battalion operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

Although the soldiers are training for the NTC rotation, they are conducting daily tasks that keep the firepower on the front lines moving. Whether it's making repairs on the vehicles or delivering new parts for the tanks, the mechanics are constantly busy.

"I am a light-wheel mechanic, and fortunately I haven't had to make any major repairs while out here, in part, because of the preventive maintenance

checks and services done daily by the operators. I feel that my section is ready for our upcoming NTC rotation," said Pfc. Terry Franklin, Company A, 27th MSB.

Many of the soldiers in the division support area are preparing for the next "log pack", a time for refueling the vehicles on the front lines and providing support to the other firepower down range.

"Our squad is setting up a fuel system supply point that holds 5000 gallons of fuel. We usually go out to the different units on the battlefield and give fuel to the battalion support areas," said Spc. Timothy Watkins, a petroleum supply specialist with Co. A, 27th MSB.

Care for the soldier is also provided in the field by the medics of 27th MSB. Whether it's treating the injured during sick call hours or conducting casualty treatment and evacuation drills, the medics are critical to the overall success of any mission.

"We provide front echelon medical treatment to the division units that operate in the division support area. We reinforce or reconstitute forward support medical companies with the brigades and also the medical platoons," said Capt. Tim Walsh, medical commander of Company E, 27th MSB.

"One way that we differ from most medical companies is that we have a treatment platoon, which has four treatment squads and in a forward support battalion, you only have two treatment squads. Therefore, we are able to treat many more patients, should we have to," Walsh added.

The soldiers of the 27th MSB appear to be ready for the NTC rotation and whatever mission they are tasked to support, and as Watkins proudly added, "We do it all out here; we support the division."



Spc. Stanley Haynes, a petroleum supply specialist with Company A, 27th MSB mounts a valve to fuel tanker.